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We may be permitted to state that the views of our contributors and correspondents do not necessarily reflect the policy of the Wednesday Review.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The snap division which brought on a defeat to the Government may not even be the little straw that shows how the wind blows. The Government themselves have not taken it seriously and it may not be safe to predict anything on it. But it cannot be altogether ignored and there have been precedents of such snap divisions deciding the fate of a ministry. We believe Lord Rosebury's ministry went out on one such. But the war has effected marvellous changes in the political beliefs or shall we say, conventions, and has obliterated the broad distinctions between the various political parties. If before the war broke out anybody had the temerity to prophesy that Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Carson would be found hob-nobbing on the treasury bench he would have been laughed at for a political visionary, if not a mad-cap. But such an improbable contiguity has been brought about by the war, which has made a coalition ministry possible. Party Government is the very breath of the Britisher, but into the crucible of war all parties have been fused, for the time being at any rate, into a national party as against aliens. But there is no doubting that party divisions will re-assert themselves when the immediate effects of the war are no longer felt and there is no need for the parties to fight against a common foe. Still the snap division is not without its significance. It may not mean much all at once. But it certainly shows a returning inclination on the part of the British politician to pause and reflect if he is any more bound to merge his political predilections for the sake of a common cause. Mr. Lloyd George's Government may be four-square against all political winds and storms, but when the feeling gradually gains ground that the country has no longer much use for a coalition Government the forces of disintegration will surely set in if they have not already done so. The Aliens Restriction Bill may be a trifle and a division snatched against the Government on that score may not be a sufficient ground for Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues to appeal to the country. But the division has a greater significance than merely showing individual differences on the question of the aliens. It shows that loyalty to the Coalition not only among the rank and file but also among the leaders, does not continue to be as strong as when Mr. Lloyd George stepped into Mr. Asquith's place at the call of his country. The Coalition is distinctly a war ministry and when the stress of the war is over it has to justify its continuance in office on other grounds than that of the imperative necessities of the war. Probably in a few weeks more we shall be able to judge if Mr. Lloyd George's coalition

continues to enjoy the confidence of the House of Commons. Meanwhile it will not be possible to say if the snap division is a precursor of a general election near at hand. It has however to be looked upon as marking the beginning of the end of a patched-up Ministry whose one purpose of hanging together has disappeared with the signing of the peace treaty. The Government may be justified in not appealing to the country owing to that, but the division has struck a blow at its integrity. Its effect may be slow in coming but it is sure to come.

From a Simla telegram we understand that the Secretary of State has intimated to the Fiji Government that the Indian labourers are to be released from indenture on the 1st January 1920. But such demand seems to be restricted by certain conditions. The Fiji Government have been given the option to continue the indenture if on the estates concerned certain reforms have been carried out, namely, that at the mill-centres the cooly lines be reconstructed so as to give privacy and separateness to married labourers; that the hospital be placed under the superintendence of a resident matron; that no young unmarried overseer be placed in charge of field-gangs of Indian women and no young unmarried hospital assistant be placed in charge of an Indian hospital where there is no matron. We are not sure if when Lord Hardinge sent his ultimatum to Fiji and other colonies where the practice of Indian indenture prevails, he tacked these conditions on. It is one thing to insist upon certain conditions being carried out for the better comfort and proper safe-guarding of the morals of the Indian labourers but it is quite another thing to conclude therefrom that if these conditions were given effect to, the indentures shall continue to be in force. If a refreshment room is put up by a railway company for the convenience of the passengers it will not mean that the passengers are bound to travel on that line, because there is the refreshment room. So too, if mere elementary sanitary conditions are insisted upon for the sake of the Indian labourers it will not justify the maintenance of the indenture system by the Colonies. We are told that the Secretary of State for the Colonies is contending that it would be unjustifiable to ask the Colonies to terminate the indenture system without paying compensation to the estates concerned even when the conditions referred to above have been carried out. We are not aware of any such undertaking on the part of the Government of India. We believe that at the instance of the Imperial Council the Government of India undertook to see to it that the indenture system was ended at once in the Colonies. The undertaking was given more than three years ago and till now nothing seems to have been done to give effect to it. The owners of estates cannot complain that they have been taken by surprise in the matter. They have had sufficiently long notice and we do not see why the Government of India should be called upon to compensate them to any extent if the indentures are to be cancelled on the first of January next.

Evidently the South African Union Government have thought it prudent to put off the evil day. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has informed the Government that the Union Government have postponed the appointment of a Commission to enquire into the disabilities of the Indians. If Indians are suffering from serious disabilities and injustice at the hands of the South Africans, where is the fairness in leaving the appointment of a Commission of enquiry to their sweet will and pleasure? They will not care to hasten an enquiry which would bring to light the gross unfairness of treatment which they have all along been meting out to Indian immigrants, and it is sheer camouflage to leave the appointment of a Commission to the South Africans themselves. When the Commission itself is not to be appointed in the near future, it is futile to discuss the constitution of it. But it is well to refer to the hair-splitting which is indulged in by the Colonial Office and the Union Government in respect of it. It was demanded by the Government here that whatever be the constitution and personnel of the Commission, it must include at least two representatives, one official and another non-official, from India. The Secretary of State is now informing us that there has been some slight mis-apprehension on that score and that the Union Government have never agreed to the inclusion of two Indian representatives on the Commission, but all that they have promised is to allow a couple of representatives from India to assist at the deliberations of the Commission. That is to say, the Indian representatives will be on sufference there and they will have no direct voice in the deliberations of the Commission and they may be turned out, a contingency which is not unlikely in the South African Colonies, if the representatives are in the opinion of the Union Government troublesome people who would expose their inhumanity towards Indians. It will not be worth our while to deel with a Commission so constituted on which Indian representatives will have no recognised status. Instead of the Secretary of State engaging himself in explaining to us the delicate distinction between the members of the Commission and unattached representatives from India, he would be doing not a favour but his simple duty, as the custodian for the time being of Indian interests if he insisted upon the Union Government appointing a Commission of enquiry at once and including representatives from India as members of it. All the fine talk of Imperialism and the different parts of Empire being of equal status with each other, is sheer hypocracy, if the Colonial Office will not put down the vagaries of the Union Government and compel it to do justice to the Indian immigrants. If this small piece of justice cannot be got for a deserving class of His Majesty's subjects it is well for British statesmen and administrators not to parade an imperialism which so far as Indians in the colonies are concerned is a huge mockery.

The Government of India have just issued a communique regarding the utilization of water power in India. We are told that for a considerable time past the Government had under their consideration the question of undertaking the systematic survey of the water-power resources in India for the generation of electrical energy and in view of the rapid industrial development now anticipated the discovery of the chief sources of power has become a matter of national importance. While we appreciate the far-sightedness of the Government in arranging for an investigation of this kind in view of the likely industrial development of the country, we are not sure that the investigation is so urgent as the Government believe. There are no doubt signs of industrial awakening but it ought not to be supposed that because the Industries Commission has drawn up a big report on our industrial possibilities, there will come into existence a number of industrial enterprises. Our experience of the results of the report of a commission is somewhat disappointing and the report of the Industries Commission is not going to prove an exception. The Government may start an investigation and the Committee appointed for the purpose may be able to write out a very valuable report but it may not lead to anything direct. The Government explain that their policy has hitherto been to leave to private enterprise the survey and the investigation of water-power sites. But development upon these lines has been slow and they have therefore decided to make themselves responsible for a detailed hydro-graphic survey of India with the object of ascertaining to what extent water-power is available in this country and how it can best be utilised for industrial purposes. They trusted to private effort and the enterprise for the investigation and they have been disappointed. But how are they sure that private enterprise would be more in evidence as soon as their investigation is made? With all due deference to the experts who urged upon the Government the importance of an immediate hydro-graphic survey we should think it would be more useful to the country at large if an immediate survey is undertaken of all small sources of water-supply which will be useful in bringing under cultivation a large number of acres and which is now running to waste.

In 1916 the Government of Madras agreed to a resolution moved in the Legislative Council that a special establishment consisting of an Executive Engineer and staff be asked to be formed by the Chief Engineer to tour round the Presidency to gather information and to prepare plans to store well water now wasted and utilise the same in suitable places for minor irrigation purposes. Although the resolution was not formally adopted and was by leave withdrawn the Government undertook to do something in the matter and in pursuance of that undertaking the Government issued a G. O. communicating to the Superintending Engineers and Collectors a copy of the resolution referred to and directing them to bring forward for consideration any scheme which had a prospect of success. From what Sir Harold Stuart said at the meeting of the Legislative Council at which the resolution was moved, it would appear that the officer who was deputed to collect information for Irrigation Commission which was presided over by Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff investigated a few schemes, but nothing came out of it and so too the G. O. of July 1916 has not resulted in anything so far. We suspect that there has not been any attempt at all to give effect to the resolution. Probably it is due to the circumstance, if we are not mistaken, that the responsiblity of bringing to the notice of the officers concerned likely schemes of minor irrigation was thrown upon the ryots and indeed the ryots with their lack of technical knowledge cannot be expected to take the initiative in a matter in which expert advice and direction is essential. One of the difficulties pointed out by Sir Harold Stuart in the course of the debate on the motion was that the ryot was not willing to pay a higher water rate in case a minor irrigation was started which would benefit him. He pointed out that if the ryot was willing to pay more for water a number of schemes would be practicable because they would be remunerative or pay just their way. We do not believe that the ryot would be unwilling to pay the higher water rate. He knows his interests quite well and when he sees that an irrigation scheme would benefit him, he would not grudge to pay the levy. But it is idle to expect that proposals for minor irrigation schemes for the storage and utilization of water will come from him. Instead of a hydrographic survey, a survey of likely minor irrigation schemes would be more useful and if they are carried out will greatly add to the material wealth of the country.

Colonel Cameron who presided over the Railway Conference which met at Simla recently did not endorse the general cry for the construction of more rolling stock on the railways. He said that he was not satisfied that the most economical use was now being made of the stock in hand. He mentioned that there were certain rules which hampered the free use of wagon stock so necessary in a vast country like India. He recommended that there should be a standardisation of goods rolling-stock and parts, improved facilities for repairs of such stocks and economical control of it and an economical programme of construction based upon facts, brought to light by such control and standardisation of stock. There is much force in the contention of Col. Cameron and though we ought not to judge of the difficulties of using the rolling stock on the railways in normal times by the restrictions imposed upon by war requirements, it may be generally said that the stock in hand is not put to the best use. No doubt some railways are notoriously short of rolling-stock which results very often in the carrying of passengers for fairs and festivals in cattle-trucks and for congestion of traffic on railways. There is much of mishandling of the stocks which as Col. Cameron says may be due to unnecessary restriction but a great part of the difficulty may be overcome by the good sense of those who have the actual handling of it. It is not unoften that a Station-Master refuses to place at the disposal of a merchant the number of wagons which he may require for reasons which have no connection with the railway. As in certain public departments *mamool* holds sway and if that deity is not propitiated wagons become suddenly scarce for which the railway companies are unjustifiably taken to task. We mention this just to show that while there is a great need for an appreciable augmentation of rolling-stock on all the railways, what of it there is on hand is not put to the right or the best use.

THE

Wednesday Review

WEDNESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER, 1919.

THE LABOUR CONFERENCE AND INDIA.

We doubt if the proceedings of the Labour Conference which is to meet at Washington will help in the solution of labour problem in India, that is, what of it there may be. We have had occasion to point out before, we have nothing in India as yet corresponding to the labour problem in Europe or America. It may sound as a paradox, but it seems to be the case, that when labour becomes more organised the problem becomes correspondingly complicated. That is, of course, because when labour is organised it comes more and more in conflict with capital. Here in India that conflict has not yet appeared on the scene. But it will not be wise to wait till it actually appears. In India what we have to do is to organise labour so as to make it available wherever it is wanted. It will be long before we may have to face the problem in as acute a form as it has to be faced in other countries. It may partly be due to the circumstance that Indian labour is mainly agricultural and the problem does not become acute in agricultural countries as it does in places where it is mainly industrial. It is therefore open to doubt, if the conclusions which the Washington Conference may come to, will have a close bearing upon the labour question in India. Any way the presence of the Indian delegates at the Conference will give them a fair idea of the difficulties which labour on the one hand and capital on the other have to face in the west, so that their interests may not clash. In so far the Conference at Washington is of interest to us. In this connection we have to expose the pretensions of those who have been telling the outside world that they are the accredited delegates of the Indian labourers who, as a matter of fact, know nothing of these delegates, and who it would appear are going about telling people that the labour problem has assumed alarming proportions in this country and they are rushing to the Washington Conference to see to it that the threatened danger is averted. We shall not pause to enquire into the motives, personal or political, which have impelled these persons to make such representations to people who know very little of Indian conditions. But we feel bound to warn the Conference against accepting them as in any way representing the labour interests in this country. The questionaire that has been submitted to the Government of India for answers is interesting so far as it enables us to know from what standpoints the labour problem is looked at in Europe and America and how labour is fast developing into a great political force in those countries. Except the factory legislation we have no legislative enactments here which regulate labour conditions except on plantations. The employment of women and children has not developed into a problem. These are mostly employed in agricultural operations and legislative enactments do not seem to be necessary here. The one aspect of the problem which has to be considered is that there is no organisation in India in the interests of labour or capital. That is responsible for the phenomenon that labour may be scarce at one place and at the same time, there may be a glut of it at another which may be only a few miles distant. It is not exactly the immobility of it that accounts for the phenomenon. The labourers do not really know where they are wanted. If there be a bureau which will give information, both to the labourers and the employers where labour is wanted and had, it would be really doing a very useful service As it is, there is no organisation worth the name and some of the organisations which have been recently started in some places, presumably in the interests of labour, are only useful in stirring up agitation of an unwholesome kind which is neither serviceable to labour nor to capital, whatever it may be to those who may boss the organisations for the time being. We have not even facilities for collecting correct statistics of wages. Only now and again the Government collect them through their revenue subordinates but for reference the statistics so collected are defective and are not generally reliable. Among the questions asked are the prevention of or providing against unemployment, and the nature and extent of the labour problem in this country. We have written at some length about the latter question but as regards the former, unemployment is not what it is understood to be in the countries of the West. Here the unemployment is rather chronic and we do not know if we can prevent or provide against it by means of legislation. It is really too vast to be dealt with by the legislator allowing a fair enough margin for the climatic conditions which in some measure foster unemployment. It is an aspect of the problem which has to be considered from standpoints other than the legislative The first thing to do in India is to have some effective kind of organisation which would make labour less immobile and in fact bring it more in touch with the employers. That is the first step we have to take and if the Indian delegates to the Conference will on their return tell us what has been done in Europe and America to make labour such an organised force in the national life, their presence at the Conference will not have been in vain.

A FELLOW-PASSENGER.

BY G. K.

It was on a Native State Railway that he stumbled over a pile of luggage in a first classs compartment. It was over croweded and we stared and scowled at every new-comer. But this specimen was of that silent, smiling, redoubtable type, who disarm antagonism at first sight. He had a jolly look on his plump rosy face and a shock of Santa-Claus beard that made his look loveable even to us, train-tired, nerve-racked passengers on a sultry after-noon.

He straddled amongst the pile of packages and climbed over a trunk and slipped! That was inevitable. I steadied him and saved him from a fall. He gave me a glad and grateful smile and seated himself by my side and took off his sun-topee displaying a beautifully shaped head covered with a crop of silver hair and looked longingly at the rack. He was short and unable to reach it. I took his hat and placed it on the rack in a neighbourly way. He narrowed his eyes showing a bunch of crows-feet at their tail which hightened the Santa-Claus effect on the bearded rosy face and said "thanks" with a captivating drawl and smirk and we became friends.

For a few minutes we were silent. The train rattled on the metals. The aloe-hedges, the trees and the sun-lit ragee-fields whisked past us. The old man had glued his eyes to his French novel and settled himself to read. There was of course nothing extraordinary in that. But I could not help noticing without much curiosity, the wonderfully quaint instrument he was carrying in his right hand. A bit of wire-gauge as big as a man's palm was attached to a bamboo-stick handle a foot and half in length he was holding. He did not lose his hold on it even when he tripped and was about to fall. He held it tightly in his hand and took care not to let it fall. What was it? It was a crude affair, a bit of a juvenile freak if you had found it in the hands of a child. It could not be a fan. It looked too rediculous a thing for that, and the man was old enough to see the folly of ever fanning himself with such a thing!

I could not suppress my curiosity. He was holding it gaily in his hand and seemed to delight in the very grip he had on it, and now and then performed a rat-a-tat with it on an adjoining hold-all as he scanned through the pages of his battered French novel. I could not guess his calling. But he was a man who was mellowed in it whatever it was and looked a peaceable sane son of Adam, an old Sunny Soul who loved travel and had developed a fascination for French novels. But this wire-mat-cum-bamboo-stick implement was beyond me and try how I could, I could not make it fit in with my old fellow-traveller.

"What is this thing you carry? I asked rather bluntly at the end of a vigorous rat-a-tat.

He looked up from his book and gave me a child-like smile. "This" said he tapping the wire-mat on the palm of his left hand with a delightful wink "is to kill flies. Don't you know?

I was surprised at this simple revelation of what looked like a deep mystery to me.

"I did not know" I said "But it is rather too elaborate an invention to kill flies."

"No, no, just the thing" said the old man warming up-killing flies had an instant inapiration on him—"Not one of them escapes you see" and he saw imaginary flies on the hold-all and killed a whole army of them with a vigorous tap. "The beggars! It serves them right," said he with a deep chuckle, as he caressed affectionately the wire mat with his trembling fingers at the end of the act. "They are such dangerous things you see."

"They are" I agreed "But do you think who can get rid of them all by killing a few at a time."

"You mus'nt allow them to propagate" cried my friend with some warmth seeing that I favoured the flies. "I hate them" he said growing red in the face and with a vigorous tap of the wire-mat "I hate them especially when they settle on the tip of my ears!" and with a sweep of the instrument near the now tingling tips of his ear convinced me that he was sane in carrying such a quaint insrument and loving it to boot.

He looked so grim and serious at the end of our conversation, I thought I was seeing before me the Donqixote of the Fly-world!

LABOUR IN CEYLON.

BY "WORKMAN."

Reports by travellers on Social and Economic conditions they find prevailing in other lands are not without considerable interest to the general reader, but have drawbacks when views founded on imperfect information are made use of to advance political arguments or dogmatise on the duties of employers, and the wages they ought to pay.

The report of an inspection of Labour conditions in Ceylon recently published by the 'Publicity Board' derives interest from the fact that the Ceylon Government is taking up the question itself, and actually proceeding to legislation on the subject.

The well knwon handicap the peripatetic Political Economist experiences in pronouncing judgments on Social and working conditions of other peoples arises from the fact, that it is only the individuals, master and man, actually engaged in any work for the daily bread under the strains and stresses of systesm us, that can tell exactly where the shoe pinches.

This was well emphasised by the talented American, Price Collier, in the concluding chapter of his "*The West and the East*" after a year's tour round the world. (Duckworth & Co. 1911)

The International Economist deals in huge movements of Mind and Matter, the general trend of which is important in designing world government and the co-operative organisation by which it could be carried on, with greatest economy and efficiency, so that we might have no wars, foreign or domestic, and the needs of Humanity might be supplied with the regularity of a single simple bit of world machinery. This is quite possible, if the matter is taken up by all Nations on that one point. If this is laid down then we all know what we are working to, and the small impediments in the way of it are soon universally recognised and good-naturedly removed by the intelligent action of local poeples and governments without any fuss.

Meanwhile it is particularly disturbing to the public to be moved to action on imperfect information; and this has been so well recognised lately, that even the Universities of different countries are 'associating' to guard themselves against Error in their Sciences and their application,—a very necessary step in all work and business. But if the Universities, directing their intelligence to the 'Great Principles' are liable to mistake Error for Truth, how much more likely is the individual and the untutored mass to be moved by sentiment to do the wrong thing on the inspirations derived from individual teachers! We must be on our guard in adopting the views of the individual at first hand, before they have been ventilated by his Caste Scientists, and are found to have no flaw in them. We must protect too the Government organisatson that collects this evolved wisdom for the use of the public in all countries; not think of established Governments as enemies and imbeciles; or use the privileges of Publicity without a sense of responsibility for utterances.

Wages are a matter of universal interest to Labour, but the value of them is determined by what they will purchase; and prices affect the employer equally with the employed in the competition to supply world demand.

Mr. Mant in the Imperial Legislative Council (September 15) reminded us that the causes of High Prices affecting Labour may be classified under three headings:— Firstly, all world factors; Secondly. all India factors; and Thirdly, Local factors.

In regard to the sentiments entertained by travellers, those felt for the poor are shared by the whole world; and the wits of the scientists and workers are being exercised to organise Capital and Labour for work intended to ameliorate their conditions. But if we start to apply wits to practical politics and economic developments, we at once find that the divergence of local conditions calls for special treatment in each case, considered with reference to the minutest detail. This being so how can a traveller decide off hand, the general scale of wages which should be paid in any country, Province, or locality, in a free market, where, engagements of labourers are simply on a month's notice of termination on either side! A personal opinion on such a matter may easily be debated and found inopportune or unscientific; calculated to cause unrest, strikes, and contempt of Employers; whose operations depend solely on world factors entirely beyond their control to alter straighaway! All that can be done is, for an employer to avail himself of the immediate means at hand for developing works, thus affording labour opportunities to hitch on.

The attraction for this does not rest wholly on wages anywhere but also on the economic conditions of the families whence a member of them may be induced to take work afar off. It may be impossible for the family to permit this without a money bonus to supply the food the absentee contributed by his labour.

It may occur to an employer or a company that providing good housing would attract labour to colonise; and that it could be done to suit the conditions, at an expense that would not be a loss in the capital or wages bill of the work, or diminish net profits. This aspect may well be considered; but only individual managements are in a position to estimate the effect on their business, in the general competition that is the ruling factor in all matters of demand and supply.

The demand for Labour in Ceylon being supplied from India, it is a question now whether Madras is going to compete with Ceylon or co-operate to share the supply. Again Capitalists are equally interested in Ceylon and Madras to know they are not pushing extensions beyond the economical limit considered in respect of world demand and Labour supply; while the currency in a state of instability everywhere is also complicating matters. Let us have all these things looked to; but meanwhile, allow current work operations to develop and mature without creating unnecessary friction, or destroying confidence in *bona fides*.

INDIGESTION AND BILIOUSNESS.

You should not eat food of any kind when bilious, but take a full dose of Chamberlain's Tablets and drink plenty of water. That will cleanse the stomach, move the bowels and soon restore the system to a healthy condition. For sale by all chemists and storekeepers.

EARLY COLDS.

Be careful of the colds you take at this time of the year. They are particularly dangerous. A neglected cold may mean a winter-long cold. Take Chamberlain,s Cough Remedy at once. For sale by all chemists and storekeepers.

TOPICS FROM PERIODICALS.

THE QUININE HABIT.

In the smallest doses quinine is purely tonic, in larger doses it is a stimulant, in big doses it acts as a sedative, and in excessive doses it is poisonous. Large doses sometimes produce deafness, and act injuriously in all inflammatory states of the mucous membrane. A doctor who says he has had six years' experience writes of the difficulties encountered in cases of those accustomed to daily prophylactic doses when they really get fever.

It would seem that there is always this danger; that people may acquire the 'quinine habit' just as they do the opium habit, the 'morphia habit', or the 'whisky habit.'

In some parts of Austria and Hungary, arsenic, which is well known as an irritant poison, is regularly eaten by peasants to give plumpness to the figure and beauty and freshness to the complexion whilst it is also said to improve the breathing and give length of wind, so that steep and continuous heights may be climbed without difficulty or exhaustion of health. The habit soon becomes a necessity of life, and the habitual user will die if it is not continued, although the ordinary amount eaten daily would poison any one unaccustomed to arsenic.

There are comparatively few things to which the human body cannot accustom itself by constant use. Some of them are good things, like quinine, which in malarious places in small doses doubtless has a beneficial effect in warding off attacks of fever. The danger is, however, that the user will take to increasing his daily medicine and then, when he requires quinine as a medicine and not as a prophylactic, will find that he has to take a much larger dose if it is to be of any service, and that may bring on deafness or otherwise act injuriously. We should all guard against using 'too much of a good thing.' Moderation in everything would seem to be the great secret of keeping one's health and the daily use of any medicine as a preventive, unless it is taken by medical advice, is a habit which should as a rule be avoided.

A great deal may be done in the way of drainage and judicious planting to improve malarious localities, and this is certainly better than swallowing medicine of any sort or kind. The common sunflower plant is said to have a very beneficial effect in improving malarious localties. Many police stations in India have gardens, and it would be easy to have all of them provided with this cheap and luxuriant plant. The seeds are largely eaten in Southern Russia, are of agreeable flavour. and are also a valuable food for poultry. The 'Jerusalom artichoke' belongs to the same genus. The tubers are rich in inulin and sugar, and the plant deserves attention at the hands of cultivators. The effect of eucalyptus planting in Italy is well known. The tree grows well on the hills in India, and is not unknown in several stations on the plains. It should certainly be tried at every Indian police station.

After American success in abolishing malaria in the Panama isthmus, we have no reason to despair of India, although the problem there is so much bigger. If we achieve success, it will be by sanitary measures, and not by dosing people with medicine. And outside the larger Indian towns, sanitary measures, draining, and judicious planting can hardly be said to have been tried. Distribution of quinine tablets is no doubt cheaper, and statistics show that in many provinces deaths from malarial fever have diminished in the last three years, so that quinine may be credited with having done some good. There are no statistics, however, to show the number of people who have suffered from deafness or a disordered stomach from having acquired the 'quinine habit.' We have heard of one doctor in the Deccan who last year, because fever was prevalent in his station, prescribed two to five grains each to be taken daily by every man, woman and child in a whole household, consisting of five Europeans and some fourteen or fifteen Indian servants. Surely this was giving too much of a good thing in the way of prophylactic.

Those who have spent many years in the east know that a good deal of the sickness Europeans suffer from is brought about by their mode of life, the food they eat, and the times of taking it, often more adapted to a temperate climate than to a tropical one. It is the fashion in most Indian households, where doctors are commonly paid by the month, to call them in on the most trivial occasions. In the Districts people frequently have to doctor themselves, as well as any of their servants who may happen to be ailing. In all except really serious cases the old adage about a man over forty being his own best doctor is as true in India as in Britain. To keep one's health in either country moderation in everything is the golden rule, but it is perhaps more absolutely necessary in a tropical climate than in a temperate one.—*Cham. Jour.*

THE NATURE OF LIFE.

We take the following interesting extract from an article contributed to the *Commonweal* by Mr. MUIRSON BLAKE. In discussing this problem of the nature of Life, it would be well perhaps to take the more physical interpretations first. The study of the various kingdoms of Nature reveals the fact that life is everywhere associated with a substance common to all organic nature, called protoplasm, and as life is never found under any other circumstances than in intimate association with this plasm, it is perhaps natural that the idea should arise in certain types of mind that life should be thought of as a result of this plasm, the molecular changes within it being the cause of the activity we call life.

There are also other reasons to support this view tho Conservation of Energy theory states that no energy ever created or lost and that therefore the work done is by any system is simply due to the energy supplied to that system, and not to any

mystical, superphysical or other unknown source. The work done by any organism including man is his physical, mental and spiritual activities, and from this materialistic point of view, they are the results of the energy taken into the body as food. Everything is thus accounted for and all human activities including the highest psychical and spiritual powers are but the result of energy converted from the food taken into the system. Where then is there room for anything else, everything being accounted for and more or less settled?

There is also the philosophical idea that all knowledge is derived from sense-given data alone. Everything in a man's mind has been obtained originally from the impressions received through his various sense organs from the objective world. Intuitionalism, or the theory that we can receive impressions from some "inner" hidden occult source is, of course, from this point of view, nonsense. Man's mind is born blank, and its later richness or poorness is dependent upon the infinity of individual impressions and sequences which impinge upon it from the moment of birth onwards, plus certain tendencies supplied to him by heredity which may make him a genius or an idiot. This empirical philosophy, it will be noticed, is but the introduction of the same idea of the conservation of energy into the realm of mind.

This whole thing is pure surmise and it should be recognised as an hypothesis, and not as a proven theory. We will first attempt to show that this is so, before introducing another set of ideas. In the first place the conservation of energy and the indestructibility of matter in the light of modern physics, is by no manner of means axiomatic. The atoms are known to disintegrate into simpler bodies, and ultimately into cropuscles or electrons, which in turn, are supposed to be vortices in the ether. According to Sir Oliver Lodge, we have not the shadow of right to say that these may not be broken up or destroyed: and so the theory of indestructibility, the so-called "sheet anchor of chemistry" has ultimately no real authority, but is a mere approximation, with nothing final and absolute about it, and the authority which the idea of the thing has engendered is due to the conception of persistence which it embodies, and which it is felt, must lie at the basis of things. Sir Oliver Lodge implies that this powerful instinct for the constancy of things is due to our inherent belief in the fact that which actually exists must be, in some way or other. perpetual, that behind all accidental and arbitrary relations and aggregations there must be some fundamental element which is eternal.

It is within this corpuscular nature of matter that the mystery of life lies, and within which many things and processes go on which are not embraced by our material laws. It is here also in these ultracorpuscular regions alone, that the laws of mind can be solved, and the question decided whether there is any superphysical or subjective ultra-sensuous source of inspiration for it.

We can see from this that the limitations of physics does not permit any dogmatism upon these materialistic conceptions, they are not proven, and from the little evidence that is available the probability is that quite a different state of affairs exists.

AUSTRALIA AFTER THE STORM.

The world is now feeling the full effects of the after-swell following the terrific hurricane by which it has been scourged for more than four tempestuous years. Civilised society everywhere is in a state of violent agitation. Both the victorious and the vanquished nations are convulsed by those internal commotions which are invariably prompted by the elemental passions awakened to destructive activity by war. Carnage on the battle-field has been succeeded by tumult in the city; and, for the moment, the demon of militarism, cast our after years of gigantic effort and immeasurable sacrifices, has been succeeded by the more maleficent spirit of Bolshevism.

The triumph of the Allies will have been dearly bought indeed if its fruits be the dominance of Russian instead of German kultur. To prevent the further spread of the moral leprosy by which Russia is now so grievously afflicted, and which threatens death to modern civilisation, the most resolute efforts on the part of the healthy elements in the populations of all civilised countries are required. For in troubled waters the dregs naturally rise to the surface; and to the dregs of humanity, whose uprising all over the world is now so sinister a feature of the times, a political system which is but organised criminality naturally appeals. Just now, unfortunately, the preachers of anarchy and universal rapine find most favourable opportunities for the dissemination of their foul doctrines. Wide-spread unemployment and a phenomenal increase in the costs of living have, with some reason, produced a feeling of profound discontent among the wage-earning classes. Industries have been dislocated, or partially destroyed by the war, trade disorganised, and the social fabric generally, shaken to its foundations. While industrial reconstruction is in progress the world will have to pass through a most critical period; and the wisdom of rulers and the patience of those whose destinies they control will be taxed to the uttermost.

To Australia, as to other countries, the sudden termination of the war brought anything but tranquility. With the signing of the Armistice agreement industrial strife flamed up everywhere. That foreign incendiaries assisted at least in raising these conflagrations, which in more violent form appeared simultaneously in India, Egypt, and other countries, seems beyond question. So frequent have outbreaks of lawlessness become in Australia during the last few months that a visitor might well wonder whether the country possessed any kind of Government at all. It is true, certainly, that if he remained in it for any length of time, the frequent applications of the tax-collector would make clear to him that there existed some controlling anthority, capable, at least, of spending money

even if it regarded the mere protection of life and property as matters of negligible importance. But the sight, too often witneseed in cities like Melbourne and Sydney of howling mobs of democrats chasing unfortunate men guilty of the heinous offence of doing honest work contrary to the decrees of the oligarchs of the Trades Hall down the streets, might make the ordinary law-abiding citizen wish that his rulers would think more of protecting his person than of pillaging his pockets. Pitt is recorded once, after a public dinner, to have expressed his gratification that the wine had fallen to his share and the headache to that of a fellow guest. In Australia the politician drains the wine-cup, while the taxpaper has to bathe his aching head.

A few incidents may be recorded in illustration of statements which may seem uncomplimentary to Australian administrators. Many more of a similar kind might be added. A month or two ago the members of an unsavoury institution in Brisbane, known as the Russian Club, organised a series of processions composed of the industrial refuse of the city, and paraded the streets, flying the recognised emblem of human brotherhood, the red flag. Speeches, in which defective grammar was made up for by vigour of style, were publicly delivered by shaggy orators advocating the annihilation of the capitalists and bourgeoisie, and a general overturn of the social edifice. These doctrines were eminently acceptable to the needy wastrels to whom they were addressed, since revolutions, like earthquakes and other great natural convulsions, favour the operations of pick-pockets. While these exhibitions, accompanied by brawls and frequent outbreaks of rowdyism, were going on the State Government maintained an attitude of complacent inaction. The sacred right of freedom of speech, including open incitement to crime, was scrupulously respected. Others, however, were less tolerant; and at last the returned soldiers took the matter into their own hands. and determined that the enemy at home as well as abroad should be suppressed. The vociferous foreigners and their friends were silenced and driven to their stronghold; and the latter would have been demolished had not a trady assurance been extorted from the authorities that no more festivals of sedition and treason would be permitted. Soon afterwards, by order of the Federal Government, several of the more obnoxious emissaries of Lenin and Trotsky were restored to their native land. But no adequate punishment was inflicted on the authors of the disturbances; and the constituted custodians of law and order refrained from taking any action with a view to the termination of what was both a public scandal and danger until the strongest pressure was applied by a body of private citizens. F. A. W. Gisbane in the *Empire Review.*

SELECTION.

THE DATE OF KALIDASA.

THERE is much controversy regarding the time when Kalidasa lived and the king under whom he flourished. Indeed, the variety and multiplicity of theories put forward have led many to doubt whether it is worth spending much energy on the investigation. The question is, however, of great importance, as it is a landmark in the chronology of Sanskrit literature. Allusions and references to Kalidasa and his writings in Sanskrit literature,—in the Puranas and the Alankara-sastras, are considerable, and if we settle the date of Kalidasa, we can find out the dates and bearings of many Sanskrit works. Moreover, the fixation of the time of Kalidasa can settle that of Vikramaditya, under whom he flourished, and hence the subject is highly important. Three principal theories have been advanced by different scholars regarding the time when the poet flourished.

1st. Kalidasa lived in the first century B. C., the time of the first Vikramaditya who flourished in Ujjain or Avanti. The reign of this king is the starting point of the Samat Era.

2nd. Kalidasa flourished during the reign of Chandragupta II. the son of Samudragupta, and the most important monarch of the Gupta dynasty in Magadha in the beginning of the fifth century A. D. or a little earlier.

3rd. Kalidasa lived about the middle of the sixth century A. D. The king of Ujjain who styled himself Vikramaditya conquered the the Sakas and, in commemoration of the conquest, started the Samvat Era which he antedated by 600 years. Thus the Samvat Era is calculated from 57 B. C. though it was started in 543 A. D.

The *last theory* was first propounded by one of the greatest scholars, Prof. Max Muller, and could not at first be lightly shaken off; but subsequently, it was completely refuted. This Samvat era has been found to have been in use long before 543 A.D., and, therefore the ingenious argument of antedating it by 600 years fell to the ground. The Mandasore inscriptions of Batsa Vatti are dated about the fifth century A. D. These refer to Vikrama Era as the Malava Era. The slokas of Batsa Vatti, to which I shall refer later on his detail, show distinct traces of having been borrowed from the *Meghaduta* and *Ritusamhara.* Now, if in the fifth century A.D., we find a poet strongly influenced by the writings of Kalidasa, there cannot be any doubt that the latter lived previous to that period.

We now come to the *second theory* which appears to be generally adopted by the western scholars.

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Pro. Macdonell places Kalidasa barely a century before Batsa Vatti, the writer of the Mandasore inscriptions. It is stated that Kalidasa flourished in Magadha during the reign of the Chandragupta II. of the Gupta dynasty, who styled himself Vikramaditya. By accepting this theory, we have to accept the following *propositions* :—

(1) Kalidasa flourished at the Court of the Magadha King of the Gupta dynasty 373-413 A.D.

(2) He lived long after *i.e.*, about 300 years after king Salivahana whose reign is now accepted to have commenced from 78 A.D.

(3) That the whole of the traditions about Vikramaditya I and the later historical writings must be altogether discarded as being absolutely without any foundation.

(4) Kalidasa must have lived long after Asvaghosha, the author of the *Buddha-charita*, who flourished in the time of Kanishka, first century A.D., and also long after the Sunga kings.

It is clear that if the *third theory* is refuted by the fact of the Mandasore inscriptions being influenced by the writings of Kalidasa, and the *second theory* by the falsity of all of any of the aforesaid propositions, *the only theory left is the first* which is corroborated by traditions not supported by the western savants.

Before dweling on the second theory, some preliminary remarks are necessary to remove certain confusions. It is admitted on all hands that Kalidasa flourished after the second century B.C. Agnimitra, the hero of one of his dramas, is an historcal character. He was the son of Pushpa Mitra Pushya Mitra who dispossessed the Buddhistic king of the throne of Magadha.

The latest time-limit is the time of king Harsha Vardhana and his court-poet Banabhatta. The visit of the Chinese traveller Hi and his records have saved this king from the fate which overtook the patron of Kalidasa. Harsha Vardhana lived and flourished in the first half of the 7th century A.D., and Banabhatta in the introduction to his *Harasha-charita* has given a synopsis of Sanskrit literature, and described Kalidasa as a classical writer. From this, it is clear that Kalidasa cannot be earlier than the 2nd century B.C., or later than the 6th century A.D.

As we shall see presently, the internal evidence against the second theory, especially against the first proposition noted above is so strong that Mahamahopadhyay a Hara-prasad Sastri in an able article was compelled to reject the second theory and put forward another closely analogous to the third. He has tried to explain away the Mandasore inscriptions and put forward the suggestion that Bharavi preceded Kalidasa. He is inclined to put Kalidasa as late as possible by making him a court-bard of Yasodharmadeva Dharma Vardhana about the middle of the 6th century A.D. The theory does not appear to be sound in view of the fact that Kalidasa was already a classical poet when Bana Bhatta wrote his *Harusha-charita* and described his writing as *Kalidesasyasuktishu* and therefore a long time is likely to have elapsed before Kalidasa could have acquired a classical reputation. The only way of disseminating literature in those days was either recitation from memory or by the circulation and distribution of manuscript-copies executed by Pandits and admirers. A poet could acquire a local reputation within a short time, but to be recognized universally as great poet required a much longer period.

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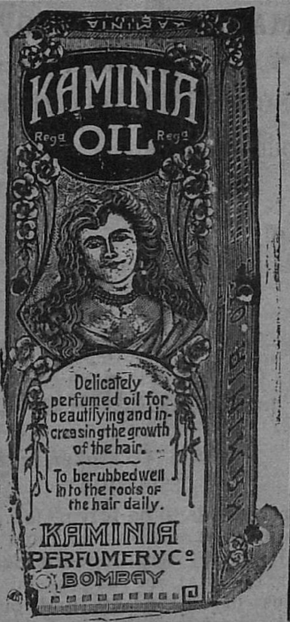

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